

# THE SSA NEWS

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## Coming Soon!

- Memorial Day, May 26, 2003
- Father's Day, June 15, 2003



## DIRECTOR'S CORNER by Angelo Doti

We continue to be optimistic that with the State Budget picture being what it is, the State will do the right thing and pass a budget on time (before mid-July). It seems that compromises are being worked on as we approach the release of the May Revise ( May 14). It is anyone's guess, so we will not venture on what we might expect. Meanwhile, our formal Budget Hearings before the Board of Supervisors begin Tuesday morning, June 10. At this point, our submittal is mostly speculation. Hopefully, we can refine our proposal as more definitive State information becomes available.

## Elder Abuse Prevention Month

At the Board of Supervisors meeting on May 6, the Board adopted a Resolution designating May 2003 as Elder Abuse Prevention Month in the County of Orange. This is the first time that the Board has adopted such a Resolution. Efforts are also under way to establish Elder Abuse Prevention Month at the state level.

The Resolution reads, in part:

***WHEREAS**, our older vulnerable citizens should be able to live safe and secure lives without fear, neglect, pain or exploitation; and*

***WHEREAS**, because elder abuse is an issue that no one should ignore, it is imperative that professionals, laypersons, and family members become better aware of the scope of this sensitive issue and learn more about methods of detection, prevention and treatment; and*

***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Supervisors does hereby designate May 2003 as Elder Abuse Prevention Month in Orange County.*

In addition, on May 12, the first Elder Abuse Forensic Center opened in Orange County. More on this in the June edition!

*“SSA makes progress  
on Food Stamp payment  
accuracy.”*

*“From food distribution  
to gift certificates and  
baby items, the  
teamwork of SSA  
staff and their  
partnered organizations  
continues to help our  
clients.”*

## Food Stamp Accuracy Update

Submitted by Ingrid Harita and Patsy Calvert

### SSA makes progress on Food Stamp payment accuracy.

Orange County's Food Stamp error rate for the month of December was 7.87%, which lowers our cumulative error rate to 9.44%. This is a significant improvement from the same time last year. However, there is still major work to be done to reach the estimated Federal tolerance level of 8.1%.

We want to thank all staff who are contributing to our improving payment accuracy and encourage you to continue your commitment to improve Orange County's performance in the Food Stamp Program.

### Food Stamp Seminars

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) are co-sponsoring four two-day seminars to discuss best practices that focus on increasing payment accuracy in the Food Stamp Program. Orange County sent three representatives to the April seminar and they brought back information that can be helpful to Orange County.

### Food Stamp Survey Results

On March 31st we sent out our third monthly Food Stamp survey. The survey's main focus was Caseload Management. Those who responded by the due date of April 5th are to be commended. The overall accuracy on the survey was 80%. Final survey answers and helpful worker tools were sent out at the beginning of May to all staff who work with Food Stamps.

A new survey on a different topic will be sent out the last week of every month to all workers and supervisors who work with Food Stamps. Thanks to all staff for contributing to the Food Stamp accuracy and for their continued support of this new project.

## Community Partners Program Teams SSA Staff With Community and Resources

The Community Partners Program (CPP), formerly "Adopt-A-Social Worker," continues to grow and help secure valuable resources for SSA clients. Together with volunteer organizations in the community and our contracted partner, the Community Action Partnership of Orange County (CAPOC), SSA staff is helping to improve the lives of many SSA clients.

Once a worker is matched with a volunteer organization, the worker may receive donated items directly from their matched organization and distribute them to the client; or CAPOC can pick up,

deliver, and store the donations, if necessary. From the valuable food distribution activities at SSA offices, to the many gift certificates and baby items donated, the teamwork of SSA staff and their partnered organizations help continue to make resources available to our clients.

Since July 2002, workers participating in the CPP have helped collect almost \$9,000 in donated gift certificates, and over \$206,000 in donated items.

CAPOC is responsible for matching more than 170 SSA workers with community and/or faith-based organizations.

CAPOC solicits these organizations to assist the worker in locating resources to assist clients in maintaining independence, achieving self-sufficiency, and/or acquiring essential items. Other services provided by CAPOC include the pick-up and delivery of large donated items, a warehouse for storage of donations, and an on-line inventory ([www.capoc.org](http://www.capoc.org)).

For more information on CPP, please see Intranet links on the CFS (<http://cfs>) and FSS (<http://fss>) divisional sites, and Admin P&P F 14.

## Two Counties Win NACO'S "Acts of Caring" Awards

Two California counties have won Acts of Caring awards from the National Association of Counties for their top-notch county volunteer programs. **Stanislaus County's** Home Delivery Services Program

won in the Libraries category, and **Orange County** won three Acts of Caring Awards for their Council on Aging program, Families for Literacy program, and Storytime program. Both counties were

honored at an awards ceremony on Capitol Hill earlier this month, and CSAC extended congratulations to Stanislaus and Orange Counties for their nationally recognized award-winning programs.

*"Congratulations  
Stanislaus County and  
Orange County!"*

## Wraparound Orange County

The Social Service Agency administers Wraparound Orange County in partnership with the Health Care Agency and the Probation Department. Legislated through Senate Bill 163, Wraparound is a family centered, strength-based, needs-driven planning process for creating tailored and individualized services for children and families to eliminate or avoid placement in an intensive level of group home care.

The Social Services Agency has contracted with three partners to provide Wraparound. They are New Alternatives, Olive Crest Treatment Centers and The Parent Institute. These

organizations hire, supervise and train the Care Coordinators and Parent Partners who work with the families and facilitate the family team meetings. The Care Coordinator facilitates a Team of formal and informal providers and supports and helps to link the child and family to support in their community. A primary function of the Parent Partner is to support the parents and ensure that parent's choice and voice are heard in the Wraparound process as they address the needs of the family and child.

Eligible children are dependents, Probation wards or children receiving special

education services pursuant to Government Code Section 7752.7, and who are in or at risk of placement in a group home that provides an intensive level of care. Referrals to Wraparound Orange County are made by the assigned Senior Social Worker, the assigned Deputy Probation Officer or the assigned Health Care Agency/Behavioral Health Case Manager. For more information, please call Margaret Mooney, Senior Social Services Supervisor (714) 940-5610 or Linda Oyoung, Senior Social Services Supervisor (714) 940-5609.

*"Eligible children are  
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## Condolences

Families and Communities Together (FaCT) program manager, John Webb, retired in January 2003 after 27 1/2 years of service to the County. John passed away from a heart attack on April 13, 2003.

John began his career with the County in 1975 and held several leadership positions. John was the Manager of Research, Legislation, and Planning for SSA from 1982 to 1994. In this position, John successfully advocated for over \$2 million in revenue for SSA annually, and received national recognition for the SSA Management Plan.

John held the position of Chief of Long-Range Planning with the California Department of Social Services from 1994-

1995. John's responsibilities included development of the first empowerment zone plan, development of foundation grants, and establishing long-range planning capacity for CDSS.

Most notably, John provided leadership and direction to the Families and Communities Together (FaCT) program (formerly Family Preservation and Support Program) for the past seven years. Under John's oversight, the program evolved from funding four collaborative groups to 18 collaborations operating 20 Family Resource Centers throughout Orange County. Through his tenacious efforts, FaCT's budget grew from \$1.6 million to \$13 million, thereby increasing the number of

Orange County residents receiving services to more than 50,000. FaCT is truly a public, private partnership because of John's willingness to listen, his respect for the process, his excellent problem-solving skills, his ability to think outside the box, and his dedication to doing what is right for the community. The Board of Supervisor's meeting of April 29, 2003 was adjourned in John's memory and to honor his many years of dedicated service to the County.

Our condolences go out to the family and friends of John Webb. John will be sorely missed.

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provided leadership and  
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We welcome your input regarding this newsletter. For information on submitting articles, contact Debbie Kroner at (714) 541-7734  
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Visit our web site  
[www.oc.ca.gov/ssa/](http://www.oc.ca.gov/ssa/)



- \* Articles for the June issue of The SSA NEWS are due by June 2, 2003!
- \* Please limit your articles to 225 words maximum and send them via email. Thanks.



## KUDOS

### **Jose Contreras, Eligibility Technician, Adult Services and Assistance Programs/Santa Ana Regional Centre**

On April 17<sup>th</sup> the Corbin Family and Community Center (FRC) presented a recognition award to Jose. Jose is out stationed at Corbin on a part-time basis. They also provided a certificate of recognition to the Santa Ana Regional Centre Adult Services and Assistance Program district. The letter stated, "Jose has become an intricate part of the FRC and a real team player. On many occasions, Jose has gone the extra mile for clients and the staff at Corbin. He stays informed of happenings at the FRC and has even attended activities and events held at the FRC, on his own time. Jose has demonstrated a genuine willingness to help our community by making himself available for both clients and staff by answering questions, making referrals, following up, but especially by making extra time to squeeze a client in between appointments. Upon follow-up, some of the feedback we've heard from clients is that Jose is a helpful, patient and quiet individual. I want to add that it's been a great pleasure having your agency as a partner of the Family Resource Center and having Jose Contreras as a part of the team." (Based on a letter sent from staff at the Corbin Family and Community Center, forwarded by Mary Wuerfl, Deputy Director, Adult Services and Assistance Programs.)

### **Elizabeth Canessa, General Relief/Food Stamp Intake Eligibility Technician at Central Regional Office**

"My husband and I met with our case worker this morning. Elizabeth Canessa assisted us with completing our application and answering questions. Ms. Canessa was wonderful. We'd like to commend her for her excellent and personable attention to our case. Thank you very much." (Sent by a General Relief/Food Stamp applicant, forwarded by Dinah Torgerson, Assistant Program Manager, Adult Services and Assistance Programs.)

### **Trisha Morris, Eligibility Technician, Adult Services and Assistance Programs/Medi-Cal Specialization Regional Centre**

"I just wanted to write this letter of commendation for Trisha Morris. She has been so helpful and polite. She is knowledgeable and competent as well as courteous. Whenever I had a question regarding Medi-Care she was always patient and made time to answer my questions. I wanted to let you know how personally I appreciate all the help she has given me through all the turmoil I am going through. No matter how busy she was she made time for me. She made me feel that my needs are important. She is the most conscientious employee and is a Real Credit to your staff. She deserves to be acknowledged. We need to have more people like Trisha. I am very thankful for all her services." (Sent by a client, forwarded by Diana Spitzer, Eligibility Supervisor, Adult Services and Assistance Programs/Medi-Cal Specialization Regional Centre.)

**Patricia Huerta-Perales, Senior Social Worker, Healthy Tomorrows** "What a delight! The Healthy Tomorrows parenting classes and the graduation on the last day were just outstanding. From the parents' comments and the genuine heartfelt praise directed to Mrs. Huerta, you could tell how much the parents enjoyed it and understood that something good and significant was going on. Please accept our thanks and that of the entire group of parents for your outstanding program, and please understand how deeply we appreciate your many efforts on behalf of this school. Looking forward to having Mrs. Huerta come back again next year." (Sent by Bob Silva, Principal, and Blandina Chacon, Assistant Principal, Santa Ana Unified School District, forwarded by Irene Biggs, Senior Social Services Supervisor and Ray Gallagher, Program Manager, Children and Family Services/Family Recruitment.)

**Ardyth Moss, General Relief/Food Stamp Intake Eligibility Technician** "I am writing to explain how wonderful your employee Mrs. Moss is. On Monday, April 7, 2003 I went into your office to get help with some financial problems. Mrs. Moss helped me, and I just wanted to expand on how great she was. She was able to answer all the questions and concerns I had. Mrs. Moss is not only an extremely nice person, but she is a person that would go out of her way to help a person in need. She made me feel very comfortable being there. Mrs. Moss should be acknowledged for the great work she does, and for the great person that she is. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter, and I would like to thank Mrs. Moss once again." (Sent by a General Relief/Food Stamp applicant, forwarded by Dinah Torgerson, Assistant Program Manager, Adult Services and Assistance Programs.)